VOTING RIGHTS

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The President of the United States of America, to

GREETING —

WE COMMAND YOU, That you and every one of you be and appear in your proper person before the Judges of the Circuit Court of the United States of America, for the Northern District of New York, in the Second Circuit, at a session of the said Court, appointed by law to be held at the City of Rochester in the said Northern District at New York, on the 4th Tuesday of June 1873, at ten o'clock in the forenoon of that day, to testify all and singular those things which you or either of you know in a certain case depending in the said Court before the Judge thereof, between

The United States of America

and

Susan B. Anthony

on the part of the United States and on that day to be heard. And this you or any of you shall by no means omit, under the penalty upon each of you of one hundred and fifty dollars.

WITNESS, The Honorable Nathan K. Hall, Senior Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States of America, at Utica, in the said Northern District of New York, this 21st day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-three.

Clerk.

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1.

United States District Court,
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

The United States of America
vs.
Susan B. Anthony

INDICTMENT FOR ILLEGAL VOTING.

Bar 24/73. Pleads not guilty
Richards Crowley
U.S. Attorney.

A TRUE BILL.

Bruce Millard Foreman.

Filed Jan 24 1873
Bail (on Grant) June 2. 187

Until 1920 the laws of most states, including New York, prohibited women from voting. Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906), abolitionist, social reformer, and champion of woman suffrage, cast her ballot in New York in the 1872 national election, and thereby violated a federal law that required citizens to obey state voting regulations.

Her crime was part of a well-planned strategy to draw attention to women's disfranchisement. In her federal trial, the court found the outspoken suffrage leader, "a person of the female sex," guilty of violating the law. The court denied her defense, that the new Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibited states from abridging the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, made the New York State law invalid.

Although Susan B. Anthony lived for 86 years, she did not live long enough to see the fight for woman suffrage won. She died in 1906. It was not until 1920 that the Nineteenth Amendment, giving women the vote, became part of the U.S. Constitution.

Unless credited otherwise, documents are from the National Archives, Records of District Courts of the United States.

1. "Indictment for Illegal Voting," January 24, 1873.
2. National Woman's Party suffrage banner, ca. 1917. Division of Political History, Smithsonian Institution
3. Subpoena to witnesses, June 21, 1873.
4. Susan B. Anthony, 1898. The National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution
5. "Record of Conviction," June 28, 1873.
6. Suffrage parade, New York City, ca. 1912. National Archives, Records of the Office of War Information (208-PR-14M-1)

5.

Circuit Court of the United States.
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.

THE UNITED STATES
vs.
Susan B. Anthony

RECORD OF CONVICTION.
June TERM, 1873

Filed June 28 1873

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